

Duquesne University Duquesne Scholarship Collection

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Spring 2011

Three States of the Mind's Eye

Lindsay Huddleston

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Huddleston, L. (2011). Three States of the Mind's Eye (Master's thesis, Duquesne University). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/670>

This Immediate Access is brought to you for free and open access by Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection. For more information, please contact phillipsg@duq.edu.

THREE STATES OF THE MIND'S EYE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Mary Pappert School of Music

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Music Technology

By

Lindsay Huddleston

May 2011

Copyright by
Lindsay Huddleston

2011

THREE STATES OF THE MIND'S EYE

By

Lindsay Huddleston

Approved April 4, 2011

William E. Purse, M.M.
Professor and Chair of Guitar and Music
Technology
(Committee Chair)

Judith Bowman, Ph.D.
Professor of Music Education and Music
Technology
(Committee Member)

Lynn Emberg Purse, M.M.
Associate Professor of Music
Technology, Director of Electronic
Composition
(Committee Member)

Sr. Carole Riley, Ph.D.
Professor and Director of Graduate
Studies, Chair of Musicianship
(Committee Member)

ABSTRACT

THREE STATES OF THE MIND'S EYE

By

Lindsay Huddleston

May 2011

Thesis supervised by Lynn Emborg Purse

Three States of the Mind's Eye is a multimedia work composed of music, poetry, and video. The purpose of the work is to examine attributes of three different abstract states of mind: the dream, paranoia, and courage. The musical score both tells its own story as well as enhances the visuals and poetry as they are presented. This document will discuss the ideas behind the work, how the composer went about creating each section and combining them, and will provide musical excerpts, the poetry itself and other visual examples. All sounds for the project are synthetic or sampled and the use of technology will also be discussed. The thesis is divided into four parts: introduction, analysis, technology and workspace, and conclusion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iv
List of Figures	vi
Introduction.....	1
Analysis of <i>Three States of the Mind's Eye</i>	2
Technology and Workspace.....	9
Concluding Thoughts	10
Appendices.....	12

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. “When You Dream,” Main Melody	2
Figure 2. “When You Dream,” Second Melody	4
Figure 3. “Paranoid Illusions,” Main Melody	5
Figure 4. “This Is Courage,” Main Melody	7
Figure 5. “This Is Courage,” Second Melody	7
Figure 6. “This Is Courage,” Third Melody (Solo)	8

Introduction

“Three States of the Mind’s Eye” is a multimedia work consisting of music, poetry, and visual effects. The overall purpose of the project is to trace certain feelings within the mind through all three forms of media. The states chosen were dreaming (“When You Dream”), paranoia (“Paranoid Illusions”) and courage (“This Is Courage”). The concepts are illustrated with a score that can both stand alone and work as an effective accompaniment to the poetry and images.

The idea for “Three States of the Mind’s Eye” initially began from a project that later became “Paranoid Illusions.” “Paranoid Illusions” is a *musique concrete* piece, which is a piece of abstract music that uses sampled, processed sounds rather than traditional tonal pitches. The music was written first, and the poetry was set to the piece. Lastly, visual effects were created. The idea of combining music with poetry was expanded upon and I wrote a small group of poems that would reflect both realistic and non-realistic phases of the mind. The topics chosen were those which have no definite meanings or answers and that every individual interprets in his own manner. I have often had vivid dreams and woken up startled only to forget the entire dream the moment my eyes open. This idea is the premise for “When You Dream.” I debated between several subjects for the final movement in the trio- love, hope, motivation, and inspiration, but I decided to end the piece with courage. It is an inspirational topic that is still ambiguous yet relates to everyone.

The order of the pieces in the work are, respectively, “When You Dream,” “Paranoid Illusions,” and “This Is Courage.” I chose this order because I wanted the work to move from a state of unconsciousness (the dream) to the most conscious state (courage

which must be applied to real-life situations). The tonal pieces both open and close the work and the most abstract piece comes between the two other selections.

Analysis of “Three States of the Mind’s Eye.”

“When You Dream”

“When You Dream” follows the path of a person from the entrance into sleep to the moment of awakening. Many times sleep is peaceful, but the intention of the piece is to outline the different types of possible dreams and nightmares one can imagine. The music follows the poetry and emphasizes the most important ideas within the words such as ambiguity of concepts, visions, and meanings.

. The opening sequence of “When You Dream” is a wind sound, which is literally named “Windy Sounds.” This sound is used as a sweeping introduction into the piece. The sound effects of wind, rain, ocean waves and white noise are often used to evoke sleepiness which makes this particular sound an effective commencement to the piece when immediately followed by the poem’s first line, “heavy eyelids come together.” The main motive is simple but its usage, length and instrumentation change throughout the movement. The melody is first heard in the bell-like Ambient Spheres patch in Logic Instruments and is accompanied by a light and airy counter melody played by a flute solo patch.

Figure 1. “When You Dream” Main Melody



The introduction begins in E Lydian-Mixolydian but at the occurrence of an F natural in the bell and harp parts provides the otherwise tranquil opening with a sense of mystery. This is a subtle foreshadowing of the chaotic section to come. As the state of sleep is fully entered and dreaming has begun, the instrumentation broadens to represent the entrance into a sort of “dream land,” which the poetry describes. The main motive is repeated, but it is extended into a slow, lyrical melodic line that is passed between different imitative and synthetic string sounds. The supporting harmonies create a sweeping atmosphere, yet the celesta is used to add motion to the piece since the other harmonies are more stationary.

The second segment of the piece introduces a new theme and repeats the original melody in a bassoon solo. The harp returns as an accompanying harmony but plays triplet eighth notes to quicken the pace of the entire section. The rise in movement in the segment correlates with the poetry as it begins to talk about different aspects of the dream:

*Such vivid colors
Captivating sounds
Swirling colors around vague yet familiar faces*

The images at this point also begin to spin and swirl more quickly with effects processing. The combination of media is meant to pull the audience into the story and set the mood.

The original theme continues to repeat in the strings and the flute, but the piece begins to modulate into a more ominous key to transition into the more suspenseful portion of the piece. The music becomes more ambiguous and the visuals more eerie as the poetry discusses what could be considered a nightmare. The tempo nearly doubles

when the suspenseful segment begins. The lyrical, repeating melody is, ironically, in a major key.

Figure 2. “When You Dream,” Second Melody



Ominous vocal sound effects accompany the music as the poetry discusses “faceless people yearning to tell you things you can’t understand.” The main motive returns in augmented intervals to transition into the next section of the piece, which is representative of the eerie calmness after a storm.

The calm segment of the music incorporates another vocal lyrical melody accompanied by a gentle, flowing harp line, sprinkles of rolled bell chords and a quiet yet powerful bass line in the low strings moving from C to C#. This is the only section of the piece that is unmetered. It represents the period of the dream after the chaos and moments before awakening.

In the final section of the piece, the dream is over and a state of awakening is occurring. The main motive returns in a whole-tone form because the whole-tone scale is often used to represent a dream-like state. The reversed usage of the scale is partnered with an accelerando to indicate the sudden transition back into reality. The piece ends with a final statement of the main motive by a solo voice symbolizing the dream’s “glimmer in the back of your mind.”

“Paranoid Illusions”

more high-pitched and begin to fade out with an added flanging effect, an effect that uses two signals simultaneously and places a small amount of delay on them to create a sweeping sound, leading into the second segment of the piece.

The next portion of the piece begins with a buzzing sound, symbolizing the poetry's "whirling vortex of passion and yearning." The visual effects portray a rippling portrait that has been adjusted in Photoshop, a software program used to edit and alter pictures. The altered portrait is rendered unrecognizable, which emphasizes the idea of illusions in the poetry. The main melody enters again, and this time it is more easily audible because it is much louder than the accompanying sounds. An element of mockery occurs as the next layered sounds imitate the call of a cuckoo bird, which is often used to describe someone who is insane. The character continues to discuss how she can escape both from her mind and from the world and realizes that death is the only way in which to do that. In the visuals, "escape from the world" is represented by a shadowed and spinning earth, which is shown in Appendix C. The sound of a gerbil with added effects processing and reversed looping begins to play and grows louder, which acts a transition into the ending of the piece. At this point, the piece slowly begins to cycle back towards the beginning as some of the familiar sound effects from the beginning return. The piece ends the same way it began, with layered whispering sounds, representing the "deafening silence" that is plaguing the character.

"This Is Courage"

"This Is Courage" is the final poem in the set. It is also the first poem that discusses a real-life yet still intangible subject. The poem is meant to be inspirational. It

The piece begins in E flat Major with a rhythmic bass line, complementing piano and celesta lines, percussive claps and bongos, and a wind sound for added effect. Since the poem first discusses the story of a little girl, the entrance of the main melody is first heard as a voice of a little girl.

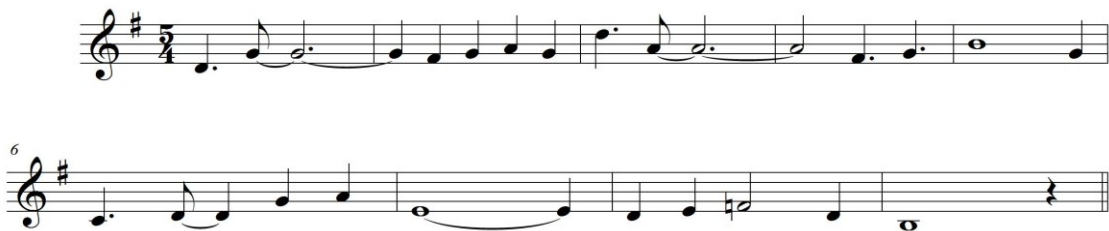
In the next segment of the piece, a solo flute plays the second main melody while the cello and viola provide a lyrical and passionate countermelody.

The meter has switched to 5/4, which is more stable than the previous meter but still asymmetrical to keep the piece somewhat mysterious. The heightened passion of the music accompanies the feelings the young boy in the poem has for a girl at his school. The building emotion leads into the third and most touching story of a young man who overcomes all doubts about himself and becomes a surgeon. The continuous modulations and the interactions between flute and strings lead to a powerful A Major chord as the young achieves the goals he had thought were unattainable.

The next segment of “This Is Courage” is directed toward the audience as the poetry describes what courage is and how it should be approached. The first melody is used as the main melody and the second melody is used as a countermelody. The main melody is doubled in the cello and a synthesized voice sound so that this segment sounds more ambiguous than the previous orchestral and choral section. The ambiguity is mostly implicative of the seemingly impossible challenges that the poetry mentions one might have to face.

A new melody is briefly introduced when the piece shifts to a unison violin and voice duet.

Figure 6. “This Is Courage,” Third Melody (Solo)



After the appearance of this new solo melody, the two familiar melodies return in

melody/countermelody format as before. One reason for the repeated use of the same melodies is because the poetry continuously reiterates the line “this is courage.” Both brief melodies represent the courage in different forms. At the end of the passage, all instruments drop out, and two violins play the main melody as a transition into both a new key as well as into the final portion of the piece.

The ending of “This Is Courage” incorporates the full instrumentation of the traditional orchestra for an emotional statement of the themes. The main theme is played in the violins and is accompanied by several layered orchestral patches. The ending of the poem gives its last inspirational message to the audience:

*Despite all the people
Who have disappointed you
Knowing who you are
Knowing you can achieve
All of your dreams
This is courage*

On the final line, the voice of the little girl sings the second melody as a flashback to the beginning of the poem and to show that all the characters, including the audience, prevailed.

Technology and Workspace

The pieces “When You Dream” and “This is Courage” were composed using Logic Pro Studio. All sequencing and composing were directly entered into the software using an Axiom 49 - Advanced 49-Key Semi-Weighted USB MIDI Controller and a Korg Triton. All instruments and sound effects were created from virtual and sampled instruments. The sound effects for the pieces were retrieved from Logic Instruments,

Spectrasonics' Omnisphere and EastWest/Quantum Leap Virtual Instruments. Other hardware used included Mackie HR824 speakers and a Digidesign Mbox 2 Pro.

The piece "Paranoid Illusions" was created in Avid Pro Tools LE 8.04. Hardware included a Korg Triton and the Digidesign Mbox 2 Pro. The piece was created using numerous audio files with effects processing from Pro Tools' Audio Suite. Sound effects were retrieved from Sound Ideas Sample CD: The General 6000 Series.

The videos for *Three States of the Mind's Eye* were created using iMovie and ArKaos. Video clips and images were retrieved from websites and willing contributors. Some photos were also altered in Photoshop, but most visual effects were created in the two previously mentioned programs.

Concluding Thoughts

Three States of the Mind's Eye was a challenging work to create, but I acquired many skills in its production. The entire work was composed over a nearly 4-month span. Of the three components, the music was the most time consuming because I not only composed it, but I did all orchestration, automation and sound design (in "Paranoid Illusions"). The piece was my first attempt at a multi-movement and multi-media work. I also had never written this quantity of poetry. My intentions in creating *Three States of the Mind's Eye* were to create a unique viewpoint of two common concepts that everyone is familiar with and one less familiar concept, paranoia. Because the first two movements are somewhat unsettling, the last movement is created to be inspirational and uplifting. Of the three movements, "This Is Courage" was the most enjoyable to compose because it highlights many of my stylistic characteristics as a composer. I enjoy composing

moving orchestral scores and this poem provided the perfect opportunity to do so. I juggled several ideas for the score, from an epic sounding score to a score with few instruments but several solo, lyrical melodies, but I am happy with the choice upon which I decided.

The work turned out well overall, but there are some areas in which improvements could have been made. Though the music matches the mood of the poetry and images fairly well, I think that I could have planned all three of the sources of media better and even more as a group rather than as three individual units that had to connect. I tend to be a spontaneous composer rather than one who plans out actions and ideas in advance, and I have learned that when a piece is written with multiple movements and with multiple components, the planning must be more deliberate.

I hope that the audience enjoys this work. It portrays some of my own thoughts about dreams, paranoia and courage, but I hope that it also gives them insight into their own imaginations and triggers their own questions and ideas about these abstract concepts. I look forward to composing another large work similar to *Three States of the Mind's Eye* because it will help me grow as a composer, a musician, and as an individual.

Appendix A

Three States of the Mind's Eye Poetry

Poem 1. "When You Dream"

*Heavy eyelids come together
You have fallen asleep
Sleep- a world of which one is never aware of entering
And never quite aware of leaving
The only tangible signs which tell your mind you are asleep
Are dreams
Such vivid colors
Captivating sounds
Swirling colors around vague yet familiar figures
Words without meaning
Faceless people yearning to tell you things
You can't understand
But sometimes you can understand
The images are so clear
You are unaware that you are separated from reality
The suspense rises
Anticipation builds
You are moments away from kissing the person of your deepest affection
Discovering the meaning of your life
Or plunging over a cliff into the raging waters below
When suddenly
Your eyelids open
Your heart is racing
Yet in that split second the dream that seemed so real
Has been erased from your consciousness
As your mind shifts from its imagination back into reality
And all that remains of the dream is a glimmer
In the back of your mind.*

Poem 2. "Paranoid Illusions"

*Whispers all around
Engulfed in my own insanity
Reaching into a dark cave of emotion
And obtaining nothing more than confusion
Falling into a sea of visions
Of things yet to come
Things past*

*Things that are
Things that never were or will be
How can one differentiate between the real and the fiction
When nothing is eternal?
A whirling vortex of passion and yearning
Is all that I can grasp
Yet to grasp the intangible is an illusion
A falsity which has become all too clear to me
Escape from the world
Escape from my mind
To do both would require an endless sleep
But even in sleep one dreams
Death
But in reality one must face both
And attempt not to let either overwhelm them
The silence is deafening*

Poem 3. "This Is Courage"

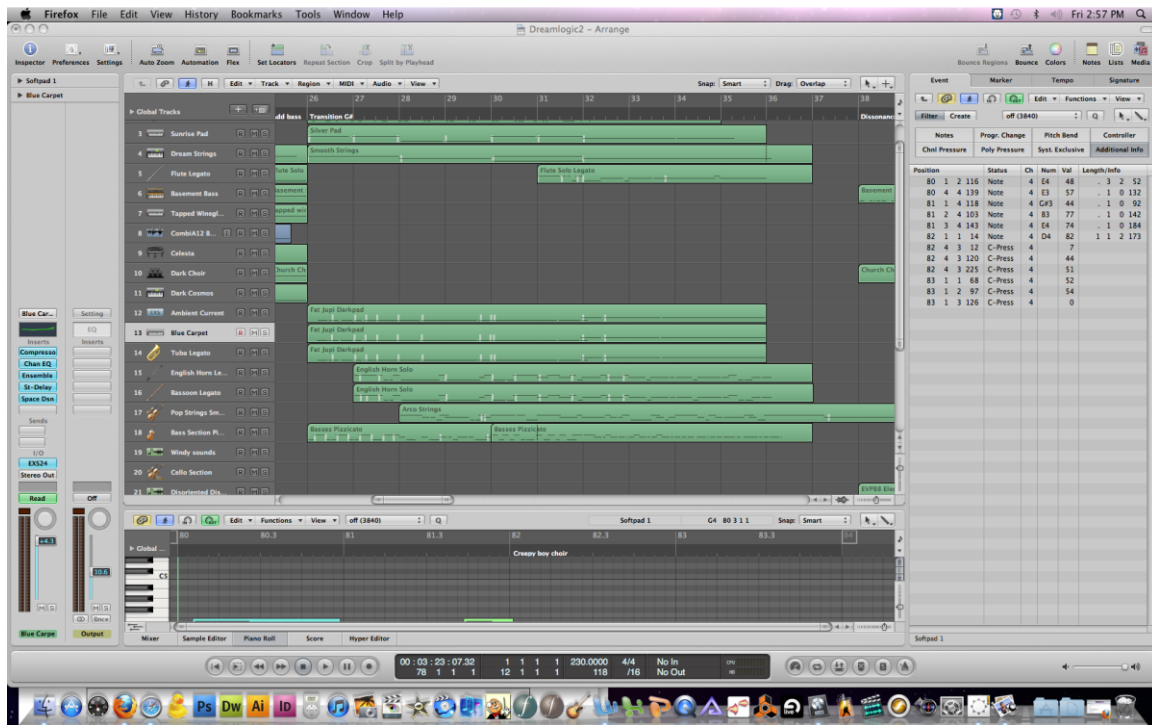
*A little girl takes her first bicycle ride
Without training wheels
She falls
But she brushes herself off and rides again
And again, until she can ride for miles
Without falling
This is courage
A shy boy has gazed
At the pretty girl in his class for months
He has never spoken to her
One day he speaks
And she smiles at him
This is courage
A troubled young man has been told he was hopeless
His entire life
By everyone he thought was supposed to love him
He looks in the mirror and realizes
He is a child of God
And he can do anything
The young man turned his life around
And became a surgeon
This is courage
Throughout life
You will face challenges
Some will be simple*

*While others will seem impossible
Regardless of the situation
You must be courageous
And face your challenge
Courage is not being fearless
But rather it is the act of pushing aside your fear
And accomplishing what you must
Despite all obstacles
And failed attempts
Despite all the people
Who have disappointed you
Knowing who you are
Knowing you can achieve
All of your dreams
This is courage*

Appendix B

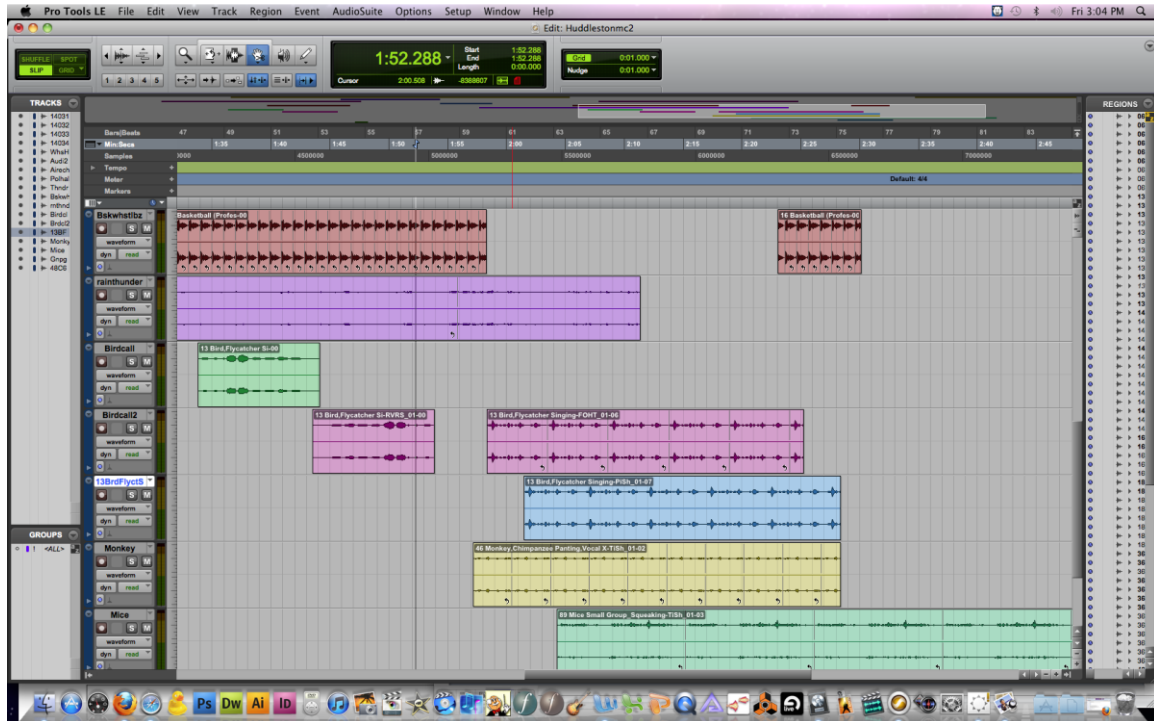
Screenshots

Illustration 1. “When You Dream,” Logic Pro Workspace



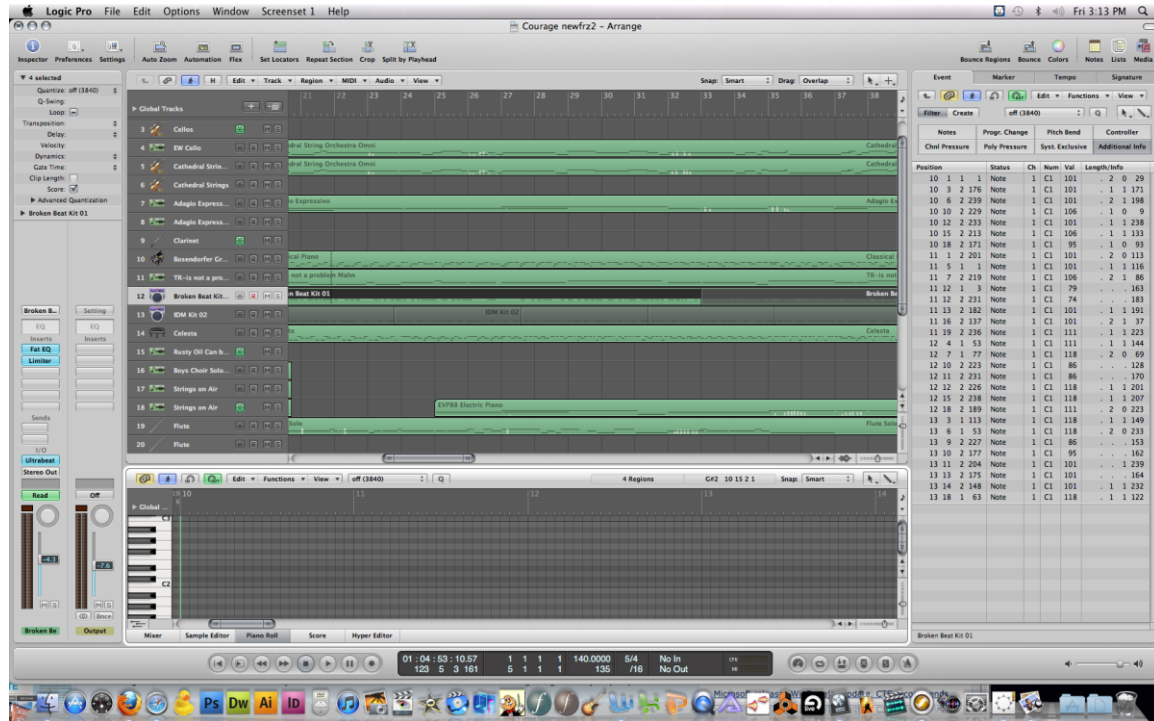
This is a figure representing the “Arrange” window of Logic. The green tracks shown are the composed segments of “When You Dream.”

Illustration 2. “Paranoid Illusions,” Pro Tools Workspace



This is a screenshot of the audio portion of “Paranoid Illusions.” In the “Edit” window of Pro Tools. Most of the tracks are looped, which is represented by a small area to the left of a vertical line within the tracks. The tracks all incorporate effects processing, which is an added audio technique that alters the original sound, but the processing is not visible within the screenshot.

Illustration 3. “This Is Courage,” Logic Pro Workspace



This screenshot represents another shot of the “Arrange” window in which “This Is Courage” was composed. All Omnisphere and East/West instruments were rewired into Logic to be used as part of the composition.

Appendix C

Video Clips

Video 1. “When You Dream”



The above clip represents the first line from the poem “When You Dream. The words materialize from the left and disappear to the right. The image is a motion clip from ignitemotion.com and the camera appears to be moving forward through the clouds. The effect “Day to Night” from iMovie has been added to give the bright clouds a darker appearance as the state of sleep is entered.

Video 2. “Paranoid Illusions”



This clip from “Paranoid Illusions” was also created in iMovie. The world is shaded to provide a sense of mystery. A “sci fi” effect has also been added to give the rotating earth an uncanny glow.

Video 3. “This Is Courage”



This clip from “This Is Courage” portrays an animated ocean clip. The clip was chosen because the poem is discussing seemingly impossible challenges, and the ocean, while beautiful, is very difficult to cross and its floor is impossible for man to reach.